

An Inside look at DTSC's Safer Consumer Products Draft Regs

Graphic Open: DTSC Safer Consumer Products

VO:

Californians spend millions of dollars on products everyday. But how much do we really know about what's in them?

SOT of Debbie Raphael

I think there might be a misconception out in the public that if it's legal to buy it must be safe to use...that someone is looking out for us. Unfortunately, it's not completely the case.

VO:

Now the government is trying to change the status quo. CalEpa's Department of Toxic Substances Control wants to ensure the products you buy contain safer chemicals.

SOT of Debbie Raphael

In fact the set of laws that are in effect right now, at the federal level, haven't been looked at in over 30 years and it's time that we look at them again...and it's not just Californians who are asking for this relook. People are asking about this all over the world. There's an understanding that some of the problems we see in the world today may in fact stem from the fact that there are toxic chemicals in consumer products.

VO:

DTSC's proposed regulation for safer consumer products is ground breaking yet it's a pretty simple philosophy and it's green.

SOT of Debbie Raphael

The problem that we're trying to fix is that we believe that Californians shouldn't need a PhD to go grocery shopping. It should be clear and people should be confident that when they walk down the aisles of their grocery store or their toy store or their electronics store...that the products that are on the shelves are safe to use for them, their safe for the environment and they're free of toxic chemicals.

VO:

That means some companies may have to go back to the drawing board and take a second look at how they're manufacturing their products.

SOT of Debbie Raphael

The exciting thing about this law that we are putting in place here in California is that it's asking manufacturers to ask a very different question. It's asking them to step back look at their design process and say is it necessary. Is it necessary for me to make this product with this toxic chemical in it? Is there a safer alternative that I can substitute, as a manufacturer, and still make my product, still make a living, still have a profit, still have a business here in California but do so with the environment and the health of

Californians in mind. In some consumer products you'll see that maybe 80% of the market has switched to the safer product but that 20% is still making perhaps the cheaper more toxic version.

VO:

Concern over what's in our household products is growing worldwide and DTSC believes California should be at the forefront of this green movement.

SOT of Debbie Raphael

This law is not being created in a vacuum. What we are seeing in the last 10 years is a recognition that people really do care about what is in the products they buy and companies here that. They understand that that's a real concern. To address that concern what we're seeing is companies across the spectrum...from automotive manufacturers, to personal care products, to small companies like Method, to the big companies like Procter and Gamble, to the Apples of the world and the Dells of the world and all everybody in between. What you're seeing is recognition that it matters what goes into products. Customers care and therefore that companies that provide the products care as well.

VO:

There's still a lot of work ahead before this regulation takes effect. DTSC is receiving input from scientists, manufacturers and environmentalists among others.

SOT of Debbie Raphael

All of those inputs are coming in to help us craft the most meaningful, practical and legally defensible program that we can.

Graphic Close:

We See a Greener Future

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